

71-598

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 27, 1971

Mr. Richard Helms
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

DDI-247-71

Dear Mr. Helms:

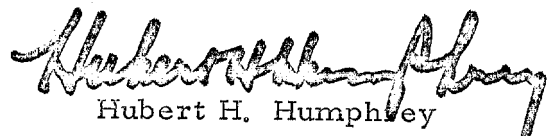
A constituent, a college professor in the physical sciences, has expressed to me concern about the policy of the Central Intelligence Agency of interrogating scientists returning to the eastern European countries.

I want to share with you my reply to him, and request of you verification that my understanding is correct that your agents are not instructed to bring pressure to bear upon returning tourists or scientific visitors, but only seek information on a voluntary basis.

Moreover, I would appreciate your response to a chief concern of my constituent which is that your policies of questioning returning visitors could result in his being denied a future visa to the U. S. S. R., even though he was unable to provide the specific information asked for. He is also concerned that the general practice of interviewing returning Americans may jeopardize future scientific conferences involving the U. S. S. R. and eastern European countries.

I recognize the problems involved in your responsibilities, but I would appreciate some assurances which I could share with my constituent.

Sincerely,


Hubert H. Humphrey

h/mg

January 16, 1971

My Administrative Assistant, Mr. Kenneth Gray, acknowledged your letter to me of November 25. I regret the delay, but these have been very busy weeks for me and only in the past few days have I had any staff to handle a tremendous volume of mail.

I understand your concern over the CIA's interrogation of scientists returning from visits to Eastern Bloc countries. This is not an unusual practice, of course, by the CIA; and it has been going on ever since the end of World War II. You are under no obligation to give any information. There is no one that can force you to do it. It is all a question of whether you wish to or feel that it would be in the national interest.

I am sure you know that the USSR is fully aware of CIA interrogations. They do the very same thing even more so when any of their cultural people visit the United States.

I shall take this matter up with the CIA. I would be very much concerned if the CIA agent that interviewed you in any way tried to bring pressure to bear upon you or cause you any embarrassment. If this is the case, it cannot be condoned and must be stopped. On the other hand, if he merely sought information -- your observations on the conference and on Soviet technology, this is within his line of duty and represents an effort on the part of our government to have a solid base of information about

Soviet developments.

Of course, the answer to all of this is for the Soviet Union to quit being so secretive. We find it almost impossible to get information on subjects that have no sensitivity at all, such as information about persons and where they live and are they alive, information on immigration matters. It's a difficult regime to say the least.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Hubert H. Humphrey